

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /031 W

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O 192345Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5646

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRASILIA 7153

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E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, OAS, CU, BR

SUBJECT: BRAZIL'S POSITION ON THE CUBA ISSUE IN THE OAS

REF: STATE 205046

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: FOREIGN MINISTER SILVEIRA APPARENTLY WISHES (A) TO PREVENT A DIVISIVE CONFRONTATION OVER CUBA AT THE NOVEMBER MEETING OF FOREIGN MINISTERS (MFM) AND (B) AT THE SAME TIME, TO FIND A WAY TO PUT BRAZIL'S CASE AGAINST CUBAN INTERVENTION ON THE OAS RECORD. THE COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY AND ITS REPORT TO THE MFM WOULD HAVE SERVED THESE PURPOSES. IF THAT PROCEDURE IS NO LONGER POSSIBLE, SILVEIRA WOULD LIKE TO MAKE USE OF THE PROVISIONAL ORGAN OF CONSULTATION (POC). LANGUAGE CALLING FOR A REPORT BY THE POC TO THE MFM COULD BE ADDED TO THE FACIO-VIGNES RESOLUTION. RECOGNIZING THE DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED IN OBTAINING AN AMENDMENT OF THAT KIND, SILVEIRA SUGGESTED THAT BRAZIL COULD MAKE A STATEMENT IN THE PERMANENT COUNCIL REGISTERING ITS UNDERSTANDING THAT THE POC WOULD BE READY TO RECEIVE THE SUBSTANTIVE VIEWS OF MEMBER STATES AS PART OF THE TASK OF PREPARING FOR THE MFM. ACTION REQUESTED: SILVEIRA WOULD APPRECIATE THE DEPARTMENT'S EARLY REACTION TO HIS SUGGESTION. END SUMMARY:

2. SHLAUDEMAN AND I MET WITH SILVEIRA AT NOON TODAY AND REVIEWED FOR HIM THE POINTS IN THE REFTEL.

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3. THE FOREIGN MINISTER WAS OBVIOUSLY PLEASED THAT THE U.S.

AND BRAZILIAN POSITIONS CORRESPONDED SO CLOSELY. HE WELCOMED OUR DESIRE TO CONSULT AT EACH STEP OF THE WAY.

4. SILVEIRA'S MAJOR CONCERN WAS WITH THE COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY. HE THOUGHT SOME SUCH DEVICE WILL BE NEEDED IF WE ARE TO AVOID A CONFRONTATIONAL MFM IN NOVEMBER. WITHOUT IT HE SEES THE MEMBER STATES COMING INTO THAT MEETING "COLD" AND FORCED TO DELIVER THEMSELVES OF THEIR VARYING POSITIONS ON CUBA IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF ACRIMONY. SILVEIRA SAID THAT, IF THE COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE WERE THE PRINCIPAL OBSTACLE TO ITS CREATION, HE HAD EVEN CONSIDERED PROPOSING TO PRESIDENT GEISEL THAT BRAZIL OFFER ITSELF AS A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE IF THE U.S. WOULD DO THE SAME. (THE CO-SPONSORS WOULD PRESUMABLY TAKE THE OTHER THREE SLOTS.)

5. WE EXPLAINED OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT OPPOSITION TO A COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY IS NOW STRONG WITHIN THE OAS--A CONDITION SILVEIRA ATTRIBUTED TO CASTRO HAVING MADE HIS OWN OPPOSITION KNOWN. WE POINTED OUT THAT THE FACIO-VIGNES DRAFT RESOLUTION CALLS ON THE PERMANENT COUNCIL ACTING AS THE PROVISIONAL ORGAN OF CONSULTATION (POC) "TO UNDERTAKE PREPARATIONS" FOR THE MFM AND THAT CONCEIVABLY THESE COULD INCLUDE THE PREPARATION OF A REPORT OR RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE MFM. WE EMPHASIZED THAT AT THE MOMENT THIS IS NO MORE THAN A POSSIBILITY.

6. SILVEIRA FOUND THE IDEA ATTRACTIVE, NOTING ITS ADVANTAGE OVER A COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY IN AVOIDING THE DELICATE QUESTION OF WHO MAKES UP THE COMMITTEE, WHILE SERVING THE SAME GENERAL PURPOSE. HE RECOGNIZED, HOWEVER, THAT IT MIGHT NOT BE POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN LANGUAGE SPECIFICALLY TASKING THE POC WITH A REPORT.

7. AS AN ALTERNATIVE, SILVEIRA SUGGESTED THAT BRAZIL MIGHT ACCOMPANY AN AFFIRMATIVE VOTE ON THE RESOLUTION WITH A STATEMENT OF ITS UNDERSTANDING THAT THE POC, AS PART OF ITS PREPARATORY WORK, WOULD, OF COURSE, BE READY TO RECEIVE THE VIEWS OF MEMBER GOVERNMENTS ON THE ISSUE TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE MFM. HE THOUGHT SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT WOULD ADEQUATELY MEET BRAZIL'S REQUIREMENTS.

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8. SILVEIRA STRESSED THROUGHOUT THE GOB'S FLEXIBLE AND "NON-AGGRESSIVE" POSITION. HE THOUGHT THE FACIO-VIGNES PROPOSAL OR SOMETHING VERY LIKE IT WOULD ULTIMATELY BE ADOPTED BY THE PERMANENT COUNCIL. HE REITERATED THAT CASTRO'S SUBSEQUENT BEHAVIOR WOULD HAVE AN IMPORTANT BEARING ON HOW THE GOB FINALLY VOTES WITH RESPECT TO THE SANCTIONS. IN RESPONSE TO OUR STATEMENT THAT THE U.S.

HAS NO INTENTION OF MOVING UNILATERALLY BEFORE OR AFTER THE MFM, HE SAID HE NEVER DOUBTED THAT FOR A MOMENT. IT WAS HIS VIEW THAT BRAZIL SHOULD ONLY LOOK TO ITS OWN BILATERAL PROBLEM WITH CUBA AFTER THERE HAD BEEN A CHANGE IN U.S.-CUBAN RELATIONS.

9. COMMENT: APPARENTLY THE GOB WANTS TO REGISTER ITS VIEWS ON CUBAN ACTIVITIES THAT WERE DIRECTED AGAINST BRAZIL AND WOULD LIKE TO AVOID BEING FORCED TO MAKE ITS CASE IN THE FULL GLARE OF THE MFM. AD DEVELOPMENT OF THAT KIND WOULD RUN COUNTER TO ITS "NON-AGGRESSIVE" STANCE OF SIDE-STEPPING ISSUES LIKELY TO PRODUCE CONTROVERSY AND DIVISION AMONG THE LATIN AMERICAN STATES. AT THE SAME TIME, FOR DOMESTIC REASONS THE GOB WOULD FIND IT UNCOMFORTABLE TO ACQUIESCE IN THE LIFTING OF THE SANCTIONS WITHOUT HAVING REGISTERED ITS VIEWS ON CASTRO'S MEDDLING OVER THE YEARS IN BRAZIL'S AFFAIRS.

10. SILVEIRA'S SUGGESTION OFFERS A SOLUTION TO BOTH PROBLEMS. FROM HERE IT WOULD NOT APPEAR UNREASONABLE THAT THE MEMBER STATES HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE THEIR VIEWS KNOWN TO THE POC AS A MATTER OF SENSIBLE PRACTICE IN PREPARING FOR A CONFERENCE ON A MAJOR ISSUE.

11. ACTION REQUESTED. I WOULD APPRECIATE HAVING ASAP THE DEPARTMENT'S REACTION TO SILVEIRA'S SUGGESTION AND ANY OTHER VIEWS I COULD PASS ON WITH RESPECT TO HOW BRAZIL'S APPARENT OBJECTIVES MIGHT BE ACCOMPLISHED.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTERVENTION, MEETING AGENDA, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETINGS, COMMITTEE MEETINGS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 SEP 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: cunninfx
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BRASIL07153
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740262-0266
From: BRASILIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740933/aaaabbmi.tel
Line Count: 144
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: STATE 205046
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: cunninfx
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 SEP 2002 by rowelle0>; APPROVED <03 MAR 2003 by cunninfx>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BRAZIL'S POSITION ON THE CUBA ISSUE IN THE OAS
TAGS: PFOR, CU, BR, OAS, (SILVEIRA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005